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# CO 670 Marriage and Family Therapy

Javier Sierra

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# CO 670 Marriage and Family Therapy

## Area of Counseling and Pastoral Care

**Javier Sierra, Psy.D.**

Assistant Professor of Counseling

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**Prerequisite:** CO 601 or PC 510

Office Hours: By appointment

Office: 232

Class Time: T 6:15 – 9:00 PM

Enrollment Limit: 30

### Course Description:

Family systems theory provides a course framework for exploring marital and familial issues. Special emphasis is given to the role of the counselor. Procedures and techniques for both preventative and remedial interventions are investigated. In this course, students will be exposed to basic concepts in marriage and family therapy, as well as, basic systemic counseling skills and techniques. A theological and biblical foundation for marriage and family processes will provide the lenses through which the relational realities of marriages and families will be approached. Students will have frequent opportunities for in-class role play of various interventions and techniques.

### Course Goals:

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. conceptualize theological and biblical foundations for marriage and family life;
2. recognize fundamental family systems concepts and interventions;
3. identify and analyze marital and family dynamics;
4. learn how to apply intervention strategies to dysfunctional relationships;

### Required Texts:

Friedman, E. (1985). *Generation to Generation*. New York: Guildford Press.

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- Gottman, J. M. & Silver, N. (1999) *The Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Guerin, P.J., Jr., Forgarty, T. F., Fay, L.F., Kautto, J. G. (1996). *Working with Relationship Triangles*. New York: Guilford Press.
- McGoldrick, M. & Gerson, R., & Petry, P. (2008). *Genograms in Family Assessment* (3<sup>rd</sup> Ed.). New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Stanley, S., Trathen, D., McCain, S., & Bryan, M. (1998). *The Lasting Promise: A Christian guide to fighting for your marriage*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

### Required Articles:

#### **For April 29, (Affairs)**

- Gordon, K. C., Baucom, D. H., & Snyder, D. K. (2005). Treating couples recovering from infidelity: An integrative approach. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 61, 1393-1405. **See Academic Search Premier.**
- Pittman, F. S., & Wagers, T. P. (2005). Teaching fidelity. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 61, 1407-1419. **See Academic Search Premier.**
- Snyder, D. K. & Doss, B. D. (2005). Treating infidelity: Clinical and ethical directions. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 61, 1453-1465. **See Academic Search Premier.**

#### **For May 6, (Divorce)**

- Westberg, H., Nelson, T. S., & Piercy, K. W. (2002). Disclosure of divorce plans to children: What the children have to say. *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 24(4), 525-542. **See Academic Search Premier.**
- Baum, N. (2004). On helping divorced men to mourn their losses. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 58(2), 174-185. **See Academic Search Premier.**

#### **For May 13, (Stepfamilies)**

- Adler-Baeder, F. & Higginbotham, B. (2004). Implications for remarriage and stepfamily formation for marriage education. *Family Relations*, 53, 448-458. **See PsychINFO**
- Pasley, I., Dollahite, D. C., & Ihinger-Tallman, M. (1993). Bridging the gap: Clinical implications of research findings on the spouse and stepparent roles in remarriage. *Family Relations*, 42, 315-322. **See PsychINFO**
- Visher, J. (1994). Stepfamilies: A work in progress. *The American Journal of Family Therapy*, 22(4), 337-344. **See Academic Search Premier**

### Recommended Texts:

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- Instone-Brewer, D. (2002). *Divorce and remarriage in the Bible: The social and literary context*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.
- House, W. H. (Ed.). (1990). *Divorce and Remarriage: Four Christian views*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Pinnock, C. (1996). *Flame of love*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.
- Schnarch, D. (1997). *Passionate marriage*. New York: Norton.
- Thompson, D. T. (1996). Women, men, slaves, and the Bible: Hermeneutical inquiries. *Christian Scholars Review*, 25(3), 326-349

## Course Policies:

Attendance is required and essential for understanding and processing the material. Any absence or missed work due to an excused absence should be discussed with the instructor.

Each student is expected to complete the reading assignments as outlined in the class schedule. Students are also responsible for any and all additional assigned readings. *Informed* participation is expected and considered in your final grade.

Written Papers should followed the following guidelines:

All papers should have your name and your SPO number on them.

All written material should follow APA style. Use the Publication Manual for the American Psychological Association, 5th ed. for details. The basic standards of all written material include a standard 12-point font, typed, double-spaced with a one-inch margin.

As expected in any graduate-level course, quality of writing, clarity of thought, and logical development of the papers would be significantly considered for grading.

Written materials should be submitted in printed form by the due date. Although late papers will be accepted, they will not receive written comments and will receive lower grades.

Because of the nature of this course some self-disclosure and personal examination should be expected. This information is confidential and must be treated as such.

Regarding incomplete work, a grade of "I" denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as "F."

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Gender Inclusive Language Gender inclusive language is required for all papers when referring to humanity (i.e, humanity sinned, not just man; Jesus died for humankind, not just mankind.). Refer to the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the APA Publication Manual for guidance on gender inclusive language for humanity. **Papers that fail to use gender-inclusive language will incur an automatic 1/3 grade reduction.**

Feedback on assignments will be timely and substantive:

**Timely:** For assessments of student work during the course of the academic term, the expectation of "timely" feedback is met when students have their work marked, graded, and returned within one week of its submission; in the case of classes enrolling more than 40 students, two weeks. Moreover, when assignment "B" builds on assignment "A," assignment "A" should be returned before assignment "B" falls due. Longer assignments are often due at the end of term, and are not subject to this definition.

**Substantive:** For assessments of student work during the course of the academic term, the expectation of "substantive" feedback is met when students receive responses that alert them to what they have done well and how they might improve their performance in subsequent work.

Students are expected to follow college policy with regards to issues of academic dishonesty (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) and proper conduct in the classroom. Any confirmed incident of cheating is grounds for failure in this course. Cheating includes passing off someone else's written work as one's own as well as looking at someone else's test answers to formulate one's own test answer(s).

## Grading Rubrics:

If you review the rubric carefully before you begin your assignment then you will know the standards to evaluate your work. Rubrics will be uploaded into the Course Center.

## Course grading:

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria:

A= Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives  
B= Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives  
C= Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives  
D= Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives  
F= Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives  
A plus (+) or minus (-) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C- = slightly below acceptable, etc.). When all is said and done and all the grades are averaged together, here is the final scale of measurement:

A	94+	C	73
A-	90	C-	70

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B+	87	D+	67
B	83	D	63
B-	80	D-	60
C+	77	F	below 60

## Course Requirements:

### 1. Participation

You are expected to attend all classes and actively participate in all class related activities and discussions. If you miss 3 or more class sessions, you will not receive a passing grade. Poor participation will hurt your grade.

### 2. Individual Genogram Analysis. [25%] Due April 15

The Individual Genogram Analysis provides you with an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to analyze a three-generational family along several dimensions significant to family life.

**Construct your family's basic three-generation genogram.** [Ex. M, G, & S, pg. 23-26, 192]. If married or engaged, you do not need to do your partner's genogram. However, if you have children, you should expand your genogram to four generations (your children, you, your parents, your grandparents). **Create your family's pattern of functioning.** You may want to photo copy the basic genogram and then add the symbols [Ex. M, G, & S, pg. 26-32, 192] **Written analysis:**

Your written analysis should address the following areas:

- Differentiation of self: Thoroughly define the concept of "differentiation of self." Discuss differentiation of self in relationship to one member of your family. • Triangles: Select a triangle in your family. Choose **one** of the laws of triangles that Friedman discusses (p. 36-39). Thoroughly define the law in your own words and clearly describe how your family triangle exemplifies this law. **Then** clearly analyze this triangle in terms of structure, movement, process and function (Guerin, et. al.). You must clearly label the description that deals with each of these four variables. • Select **one** law of family life (Friedman, Chapter 2). Identify and describe the application of these two laws in your family. Be sure you not only name the law but also summarize what it means in a sentence or two. Then provide an adequate narration of how your family exemplifies this law. • Insights: What new insights about yourself and your family have emerged as you worked on this assignment?

### 3. Best Practices Paper [35%]

"Best Practices Paper" is a collection of books, articles, or resources that

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represents a variety of ways to work with a particular issue. Topics: Affairs; Divorce; Stepfamily; Pre-marital counseling/Marriage enrichment; Parenting. **Due dates for papers & in-class presentation:** April 29 --- affairs & premarital counseling/marital enrichment May 6 --- divorce & parenting May 13 --- stepfamilies **Sections of your paper include:**

**Treatment Overview:** Develop a five-page summary of the salient treatment issues that are associated with your topic. This is similar to your classic research paper. **Book Reviews:** 1 Secular: You will present a summary of the treatment protocol from 1 secular book that deals with your topic. This summary should be an outline of "how" to treat the problem. This may not be a photocopy from the book. 1 Christian: You will present a summary of treatment protocol from 1 book written from a Christian perspective. This summary should include a discussion of the Christian issues present in this problem and also include an outline of "how" to treat the problem. This may not be a photocopy from the book. (Textbooks for the class are not acceptable)

**Web Resources:** What websites contribute to helping counselors deal with this problem area? You will describe the content of 4 websites that you have reviewed that will help counselors or clients learn more about this problem area.

**In-Class Presentation:** On your due date, you will upload your Best Practices Paper to the Course Discussion Center. In addition, you will work collaboratively with the other students who researched the same topic as you studied to present to the class a 30-minute section that gives the "highlights of the best" from your collective work. As the groups will be comprised of 2-3 students, it is necessary for everyone to have a speaking part during the presentation.

4. Mid-Term and Final examination 40 % Combined

The mid-term exam will cover all material from the first week of class. The final exam will cover the second half of the material presented in class. Both exams may include multiple-choice, matching, short answer, and essay questions.

**Instructor reserves the right to change this schedule of class topics and assignments any time during the semester.**

Date	Content	Readings
Feb. 13	Introduction; Theoretical Foundations	Friedman, Chapters 1-2
Feb. 19	Basics	Friedman, Chapters 3, 4, 7, & 9

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Date	Content	Readings
Feb. 26	Triangles	Guering, chapters 1 – 5; Friedman, pp. 35 - 39
March 4	Triangles	Guerin, chapter 6 - 10
March 11	Genograms	McGoldrick, chapters 1 – 8; Friedman, chapters 6, 11 & 12
March 18	Theology	Friedman, chapters 8, 10; Stanley, chapters 1, 14
March 25	Mid-Term Exam; Marriage Principles	Gottman, chapters 1 - 5
April 1	Reading Week	
April 8	Marriage Principles	Gottman, chapters 6 - 11
April 15	Marital Interventions	Stanley, chapters 2 - 5
April 22	More Marital Interventions	Stanley, chapters 6 - 10
April 29	Affairs	3 Articles
May 6	Divorce	2 Articles
May 13	Step Families	2 Articles
May 20	Final Exam	

### Some Comments on the Development of Your CO720 Group Presentation

At the beginning of the course, you will select a topic for further research. Each topic is pre-assigned a presentation week. This date is not negotiable. Your presentation topic is linked to the main class topic, and should provide a significant contribution to the content and substance of the readings for the class. You and the others who select this topic are to work together as a team to create a 30-minute presentation on your topic and prepare for a 10-minute discussion after presenting. Consider this a professional



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presentation. Your **entire group** should come to class dressed in a **professional manner** and ready to lead the class for the first 40 minutes.

Your presentation has three components. The first component is a meeting with me **prior** to your session to discuss the focus and direction of your presentation. Your group should schedule a 15 minute appointment no later than 1 week prior to your presentation. You will review your presentation with me during this time. The second is an organized and coherent presentation about your topic. The third component is a handout for your course mates, which must be emailed to me at least 48 hours before your scheduled presentation date so that I can upload it to the course icon.

Let's look at these components one at a time.

## Meeting about your Presentation

At least 1 week prior to your presentation date, your group will schedule a 15-minute meeting with me to discuss the flow and direction of your presentation. You should bring (1) a proposed time outline of your 40-minute teaching session and (2) a rough draft of your handout. We will work together to make your presentation one of high quality. You should talk to me to schedule the time. Ideally all team members should attend.

## Class Presentation

On your assigned Tuesday, your group will present a 30-minute workshop dealing with your topic area. Your workshop **must** include an overview of the key features of this problem, and a substantial discussion of counseling considerations. Consider what you would want to know about this topic as you construct your presentation. Then, the team will lead a 10-minute Q&A time with your classmates.

## Class Handout

Your group presentation will include a handout for each class member. In your handout you will include: (1) Key summary of your in-class presentation; (2) Resource list (with resources designated for counselors or clients); and a (4) Reference list. These packets **MUST** be **no** longer than 5 pages.

General Handout Contents:

1. No typographical or grammatical errors.
2. Thoroughly summarizes the presentation.
3. Resource list included items for clients. Minimum of 6 items - maximum of 10. [Ex. Hotline numbers, support group contact information, reading material for clients (self-help books, etc.)]
4. Resource list included items for counselors. Minimum of 6 key books or journal articles for counselors. Maximum of 10 items.

## Team Work

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Because I am thinking about this experience as a "whole," I expect each team member to work to develop an excellent presentation. Your team decides how you want to divide your time, talents, and efforts. For example, a subgroup may develop the handout, while another subgroup works on the class presentation. You will receive a grade as a "team" for your combined efforts to prepare an excellent 40-minute class on the disorder of your choice. **Each team member is expected to submit the team feedback evaluation form to the instructor at the end of their presentation.**

**Grading:** See rubric at the end of this document. I consider the overall presentation as well as individuals' presentations. In other words, some variation in grades may exist within a team.

### Team Feedback Sheet

Describe the nature of your contribution to your team:

Answer the following questions using the rating scale.

	Strongly Strongly Agree Disagree			
We worked together as a team.	1 5	2	3	4
I contributed an <b>equitable</b> amount of time and energy compared to my team members.	1 5	2	3	4
If you strongly disagreed to the item above, did you feel obligated to contribute too much? Or too little?	Too little Too much			
We resolved differences of opinion in a respectful manner.	1 5	2	3	4
Some team member(s) did not pull their weight in the group.	1 5	2	3	4

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Your comments?

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## Grading Rubric for Class Presentation

	Excellent	Good	Weak	POINTS
<b>Class Presentation</b> Excellent = 46-50 Good = 45-41 Weak = 40 or lower	Presentation reflects a graduate level engagement with topic. Reviewed an advanced understanding of counseling issues germane to this situation. You dress and conduct yourself in a <b>professional manner</b> . Time was well allocated. You did not go overtime. Audio-visual aids reflect professional excellence and are used properly.	Demonstrates an emerging graduate level understanding about your topic. Your dress and conduct was somewhat <b>professional</b> . Time was allocated in an appropriate manner. You did not go overtime. Audio-visual aids were used appropriately.	Presents basic information that does not go beyond text book. Dress and presentation were too casual in nature. Time was not used well. Presentation was too short or too long. Audio-visual aids were not used well.	
<b>Class Handout</b> Excellent = 24-25 Good = 23-21 Weak = 20 or lower	Covers all required elements in graduate level manner. No typographical or grammatical errors. Thoroughly summarizes the presentation. Resource list included items for clients. Minimum of 6 items. [Ex. Hotline numbers, support group contact information, reading material for clients (self-help books, etc.)] Resource list included items for counselors. Minimum of 6 key books or journal articles for counselors.	Covers most aspects of handout. Some typographical or grammatical errors. Information moderately appropriate to topic. Treatment information lacks clarity. Resource information is good, but some aspects are missing.	Many aspects of handout are missing. Many typographical or grammatical errors. Treatment information is inadequate. Resource information is inadequate. Handout is only a copy of PowerPoint use in presentation.	
<b>Overall Comments</b> Excellent = 24-25 Good = 23-21 Weak = 20 or lower	Class session flowed smoothly in all ways. Team members gave equitable investment of time and energy as evidenced in the overall presentation. Coherent.	Class session had some problems to flow smoothly. Uneven involvement by team members is evident. Moderately coherent presentation.	Class session seemed thrown together at last minute. No depth to information or counseling strategies.	

Total: \_\_\_\_\_ out of 100